

HOUSING MANAGEMENT

BULLETIN

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOUSING OFFICIALS

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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL PLANS

Losing no time after its election, the Executive Council of the Management Division met in Pittsburgh on Thursday evening, May 16, 1940, to start its program for the coming year. Staff, finances, committees, and Executive Council meetings were all discussed from many angles.

It was unanimously agreed that for the time being the Director of NAHO should act as Executive Secretary to the Division. To give the Division the staff service that it deserves, however, it was also agreed that an Assistant Secretary and Field Consultant should be employed as soon as the best man for the job could be found. He should have had practical management experience, with a record that would commend him to all progressive housing managers as well as to executives and board members of local authorities and other housing agencies. In addition to these qualifications, he should also have demonstrated ability in association work, a flexible and inquiring mind, and general administrative capacity. It is hoped that the appointment of the Assistant Secretary and Consultant may be announced in the very near future.

Committees

The Executive Council also considered a proposal to establish at once committees on management education, publications, and research. After thorough discussion, however, it was agreed that the first two committees should be established now and that in place of a standing committee on research, special committees on specific research topics would be set up from time to time as needed. Since Pittsburgh, Chairman Sharpe of the Division and President Palmer of NAHO have agreed that for the coming year the Committee on Community Relations in Housing Developments, which has just issued its first report, should be a Joint Committee of the Association and the Management Division. Its personnel will be announced in the near future.

Finance

With the immediate prospect that membership dues will meet only a part of the Division's expenses in the near future, the Council members recommended that an additional foundation grant be requested for the Division's program that if such funds were not forthcoming in the immediate future, NAHO's funds for field service be concentrated as far as possible upon the advisory and consultant activities of the Division. Since then, preliminary inquiries have shown that the chances for special funds for the Division's immediate program are practically nonexistent and steps are being taken to shift a large part of the field service resources to management.

Additional recognition of the importance of management in current housing programs was given by NAHO members in electing to the Board of Governors at Pittsburgh James L. Stephenson, Manager of Cedar Springs Place and Executive Director of the Dallas Housing Authority. Mr. Stephenson is also President of the Association of Texas Housing Authorities. Chairman Sharpe, of course, is a member of NAHO's Board ex-officio. Last week he was also named by President Palmer to the important Committee on Defense Housing of the Board of Governors. This Committee's other members are President Palmer, Vice-President Weinfeld, past President Bohn, and Mr. Miles Colean, a member of the Board since 1935.

The Executive Council will meet next on July 13 in Cincinnati.

PRE-OCCUPANCY INSTITUTE

"A month of Sundays" was scheduled in April of this year by the Liberty Square Housing Project in Miami for a pre-occupancy institute designed to educate and prepare prospective tenants for project tenancy, leading them step by step from eligibility to occupancy. Every Sunday during the month late

afternoon through evening sessions were scheduled, each session devoted to a series of fifteen minute discussions by members of the management and tenant selection staffs on various phases of general topics. The first session covered Eligibility Standards; the second, Occupancy; the third, Use and Care of Home and Grounds; and the fourth, Community Activities-Self-Help Projects. At each session the previous sessions were reviewed, so that the final session was a summarization of the entire institute. All the sessions were opened with community singing and were followed by discussion and quiz periods.

IDEAS

MAPS . . .

As a time saver in the handling of rentals for the 500 housing units of the Huntington West Virginia Housing Authority, three rental guide maps are used, one for each project. The maps are so arranged that the following information is available at a glance:

The location of all project buildings.

The location of different sized apartments (different colors indicate 3-½ rooms, 4-½ rooms, etc.).

The location in the buildings of apartments --that is, first floor, second floor, etc.

The location of all unoccupied dwellings for lease; all dwellings leased but not occupied; all dwellings leased and occupied.

Room size.

Rental cost.

Location of gas and electric meters.

The maps are made on black masonite and set into wooden frames. Colored shade cloth to correspond to the colors of the occupancy and vacancy history cards is pasted on the board to designate the dwelling units.

TENANT GARDENERS . . .

The Philadelphia Housing Authority (21st and Parkway, Philadelphia) has issued a neat little book called Hill Creek in Bloom, a handbook of "Practical Suggestions for Lawn Success." The booklet covers all phases of grounds maintenance by tenants--planting of flowers and shrubs, use of hedges or fences, care of trees, erection of trellises, parking of cars, care of walks. It is very simply written and attractively illustrated and might well serve as a model for similar instruction booklets for tenants of any project in the country.

FEES . . .

A fee for the use of the Community Building by any organization sponsoring an affair for profit is charged by the Community Council of FSA's Greenhills. The motion authorizing this fee as passed by the Council reads: "That organizations be charged 5 per cent of net profit, except that organizations be permitted to retain a minimum net profit of \$30."

At the time the fee was voted on by the Council, it was also agreed to enforce an existing rule at Greenhills requiring the collection of a \$5 utility charge (formerly \$10) for use of the Community Building, this fee to go to the management office. All moneys collected by the Council are eventually turned back to the community.

PIGS — POULTRY . . .

With the outbreak of war in Europe last September, English housing was forced to a full stop and a series of emergency acts relating to the housing program were passed. The substance of these measures was noted in the December 30 issue of NAHO NEWS. With the continuation of hostilities in Europe, the British Minister of Health issued a circular to housing authorities urging that in view of the importance of increasing food supplies, restrictions against the keeping of poultry and pigs on housing estates be relaxed. Certain safeguards are still to be imposed, however, one of which is: "a ban on the keeping of male birds of such an age as to be capable of creating a nuisance to neighbours by crowing."

PAINTING . . .

Sequel to the "Redecoration by Tenants" story in the April 18 BULLETIN is the news from Lockefield Gardens (Indianapolis) that "for a long time we said 'women can't paint,' but we take it all back, for some of the best apartments turned out yet were done by the housewives. Top honors for ingenuity go to Mrs. Anderson Gray, Apartment 176, who sprayed her apartment with her vacuum cleaner attachment."

KEYS — WAX . . .

Two ideas which have been found successful by the management of the University Terrace Housing Project in Columbia, South Carolina,

VISUAL RECORDS

The use of visual records is one of the management techniques explained in ADMINISTRATION OF A SMALL PROJECT; handbook of operation of Lavanburg Homes, by Abraham Goldfeld, Lavanburg Homes, 132 Goerck Street, New York City. May, 1940. 23 pp. illus. charts. \$.50.

are, first, the purchase of wax in 30-gallon drums at a cost of \$1.30 per gallon and its resale to the tenants in pints and quarts at \$2.00 per gallon. The profit of 70¢ takes care of handling. The management feels that in this way they are not only assured that the tenants are using a wax which is not harmful to the asphalt tile floors but that the tenant is afforded a considerable saving in cost of wax.

The second idea which the management has found successful is use of a key-making machine, which they purchased for \$40. Duplicate apartment keys are made for tenants at a cost of 15¢ and duplicate mail box keys for 10¢, which is both a convenience and a saving to tenants.

MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The unquestioned need for a system of training personnel for public housing management has been a major consideration with the Division for some months. Within the past few weeks two notices describing training systems to meet this need have gone out to those Association members concerned in such a program.

N.Y.U. Institute

The first notice covered the New York University Second Annual Housing Management Institute, which is to meet July 8 to August 2. The program for the Institute is now reaching its final form. As the notice indicates, it will combine seminar sessions with actual field visits to going housing projects and local authority offices in Washington, New Haven, Buffalo, Philadelphia, Newark, Boston, Cambridge, Atlantic City, Syracuse, Stamford, and Schenectady. Speakers have been carefully selected and include both managers of unqualified ability and proven experience and USHA officials from Washington. Registration for the course is limited to 50 and is restricted to either managers and assistant managers of large-scale, low-rent housing projects and those selected by local authorities or other agencies for such positions or to others who meet the educational or experience requirements set up by the committee in charge of the Institute. Local authorities are urged to get in immediate touch with N.Y.U. (by use of the self-addressed card enclosed) indicating what their plans are with reference to the Institute.

In-Service Apprenticeships

The second means of management training as evolved by the Division is a system of in-service apprenticeships, summarized in the

Division's publication In-Service Apprenticeships in Housing Management; a proposal for a training system. All authorities whose programs are now in the management stage have received copies of this publication and NAHO is anxious to have their reactions to the plan. Additional copies are available free to members upon request to NAHO or 25¢ to others.

The success of such a program depends entirely on close cooperation with the Association in registering untrained staff members eligible for apprenticeships and in registering projects willing to take on such apprentices. Experimental steps in this direction have been taken in Jacksonville and Miami, Florida, and in Indianapolis. READ THE REPORT AND LET US HAVE YOUR COMMENTS.

PITTSBURGH TENANT SELECTION

Of general interest may be some of the conclusions reached by the tenant selection staff of the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh after completion of an applicant investigation which resulted in 300 eligibles' being placed on the rolls for tenancy in Bedford Dwellings, a 420-unit, USHA-financed project. It was found that a typical tenant would be "a Negro employed as a laborer in the steel industry. His immediate neighbors . . . would include a porter working for a railroad, a WPA worker, and a recipient of general assistance . . . This typical tenant would move into his 4½ room project apartment with his wife and two children (one under five, the other between five and 16 years of age) . . . His former home was decidedly substandard. It lacked adequate heating facilities, had no bath or shower, was in need of major repairs, and was overcrowded, yet he paid rent at the rate of \$8.19 per room (including utilities), which took 27 per cent of his earnings." (The Bedford Dwellings average monthly rent is to be \$4.86 per room, which it is hoped will require no more than 25 per cent of the tenants' income even with considerably more space per person.

Diversified Employment

In making selections, the Authority decided that "although housing need, combined with low income, is the most important factor in determining which families shall be given preference, . . . no more than 20 per cent of the tenant group may be comprised of persons receiving public assistance or employed by the WPA. . . Federal policy advises as much diversification of source of income as possible. The 128 employed applicants (excluding WPA) now in the pool of eligibles represent about 50 different occupations and nearly 100 different employers."

BULLETIN BECOMES OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

Under the terms of the by-laws of the Management Division of NAHO adopted in Pittsburgh last month, with this issue the HOUSING MANAGEMENT BULLETIN becomes the Division's official publication. Thus this issue is the last one to be sent to the temporary mailing list built up before and during the formation of the Division. Hereafter, unless the Executive Council of the Division should establish a subscription price for the BULLETIN alone, it will go only to active and associate members of the Division and to agency members of NAHO.

By-Laws

Although the Division's by-laws will appear in full in the Selected Proceedings of NAHO's Eighth Annual Meeting, including the First Annual Meeting of the Management Division, Article IV on Membership and Article V on Dues should be of particular interest to BULLETIN readers:

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Section I - Membership in this Division shall be open to all members of the National Association of Housing Officials who meet the requirements hereinafter set forth.

(a) Active Members - Active members shall include any individual who has been actively engaged in a responsible administrative capacity in the management phases of a housing project or program, public or private, rural or urban, for the period of one year. Election to active membership shall be upon the approval of the Executive Council. All persons in this category as of May 13, 1940 will be classified as eligible for active membership without action by the Executive Council.

(b) Associate Members - Associate members shall include any individual engaged in the direct management phases of a housing project or program not meeting the qualifications of an active member. Applicants for associate membership must be recommended by an active member and election to membership shall be by the Executive Council.

Section II - The Division may from time to time revise its membership requirements setting up such standards as are deemed necessary to further the objectives of the organization.

Section III - Membership Certificate - Each member shall receive a certificate of membership issued by the Executive Council.

Section IV - Suspension or Expulsion - Any member who shall be found guilty of an offense

which, in the opinion of a majority of the Executive Council, is directly contrary or harmful to the interests, welfare or ethical standards of the Division shall be dropped from the membership rolls.

ARTICLE V - DUES

Section I - The dues for each membership group are:

- (a) Active Members -- \$5.00 per annum
- (b) Associate Members - \$3.00 per annum

Section II - All dues are payable annually and will include an annual subscription to the HOUSING MANAGEMENT BULLETIN, the official publication of the Division, and such other classes of publications of the Division as the Executive Council shall authorize for distribution.

Membership Applications

Application cards are being sent with all copies of this BULLETIN. The Division's officers especially request that all persons eligible under the terms of the by-laws apply at once for Division membership so that a vigorous start can be made with the program and also that the Division's membership may be as large as possible as the process of selecting committees for the coming year goes ahead.

Bulletin Editorship Changes

As this long-awaited change takes place, the thanks of NAHO's officers, members, and staff go to Mr. Goldfeld and Mrs. Rosahn, who initiated the BULLETIN in February, 1938, and have contributed substantially to its value so far. They have helped lay the foundation for a newsletter that should become one of the chief mediums for developing and building up the knowledge and skills of housing management. Without such a device, no real profession can be developed.

Mr. Goldfeld's experience and ability have been assured to the Division by his election at Pittsburgh to the Executive Council.

MANAGEMENT OPENINGS

Three authorities within the past month have conducted civil service examinations for housing management positions -- Gary, Indiana, Chicago, and New Haven, Connecticut. Results have not yet been announced. We would like to have a month's notice of examinations of this kind so that they might be advertised in the BULLETIN or NAHO NEWS. (See NAHO NEWS, May 27, 1940.)